



Bitterroot National Forest

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GIVING BACK TO GET AHEAD ~ VOLUNTEER FOLLOWS CONSERVATION ETHIC TO BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST

Bitterroot National Forest, Hamilton, MT August 10, 2007 --- The Great Outdoors has always lured people for a variety of reasons. But more and more young people are heading to places like the Bitterroot National Forest because it's the right thing to do. They want to give back to the environment while exploring possible careers in conservation.

Eric Blythe, an intern with the Student Conservation Association (SCA), recently arrived as a volunteer from Winterset, Iowa to work as a soil technician and provide soils work throughout the forest.

As needs outpace budgets on America's public lands, the efforts of SCA volunteers have become essential. Some 50,000 young people have volunteered through SCA since 1957, and National Park Service Director Fran Minella recently stated that "we can't do without SCA." The energy and idealism of the volunteers allows federal and state land-management agencies, as well as non-profit organizations, to meet the needs of the public in ways which wouldn't otherwise be possible. Blythe, 21 is serving at the Bitterroot National Forest in order to make a meaningful contribution to its environment.

"Throughout the past three months in western Montana, I have been able to experience many different aspects of the Forest Service. Most of my work has involved soil monitoring in proposed commercial thinning units for fuels reduction projects. I have also been a part of crews repairing burn